



A MONTHLY JOURNAL
FOR IOWA EDUCATORS

School Leader Update

May 2011

Director Jason Glass speaks with DE staff about plans for the future.



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BELIN-BLANK RECOGNIZES TOP AP PROGRAMS

The University of Iowa's Belin-Blank Center is recognizing the state's top Advanced Placement programs with the release of their 7th annual Iowa AP Index.

The index assesses Advanced Placement (AP) participation among accredited public and private schools in Iowa. The index is part of the Belin-Blank Center's efforts to encourage and recognize Iowa schools that provide high-level academic opportunities for high school students.

George Washington High School in Cedar Rapids achieved the No. 1 ranking on the Index for the third year in a row.

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Reorganizing to Lead, Innovate, Serve

A couple of months ago, I shared with you my creed for the Department of Education as we lead a transformative effort in education and in government. That creed was comprised of three components: offer leadership to confront important issues; be fearless in our approach to innovation; and provide first-rate service to the people of Iowa.

But for this creed to be more than just words it requires action and, in some case, doing things differently than in the past. That includes a new look at the Department itself. I'm pleased to share with you a preview of a reorganization that we will be implementing at the Department over the next few weeks.

This reorganization is being brought about in order to sharpen the Department's ability to provide leadership for education reform and to be of better service to Iowa's districts, schools, teachers, and communities. Some highlights include:

- A new division – **Communications & Information** – will be created to provide information and conduct meaningful research and policy analysis. This division will be administered by Gail Sullivan.
- Another new division – **School Finance & Support Services** – will focus on the various services the Department provides to districts and schools. This division will be administered by Jeff Berger.
- The PK-12 division will be renamed **Learning & Results**. Kevin Fangman will continue to administer this division, and is being promoted to Deputy Director of the Department.



Director Jason Glass with students during a recent visit to Clear Creek-Amana schools.

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New College and Career Curriculum: I Have A Plan Iowa

Iowa College Aid is pleased to announce Roads to Success, a college and career curriculum now available in I Have A Plan Iowa™. The program is committed to helping young people make the connection between school and their aspirations for adulthood. The curriculum is designed to help students develop plans for the future, stay focused on their schooling, and acquire critical skills to facilitate transition from the teen years to adulthood.

Roads to Success includes project-based learning units that build critical thinking, teamwork and leadership skills. The program features a research-based grade 7 through 12 guidance curriculum, with student motivation at its core. The grade-by-grade lesson plans offer a comprehensive, systematic way to address key issues: study skills, career development, reasons to complete and excel in high school, steps to post-secondary education attainment, finding and keeping a job, and financial literacy.

The program is designed for delivery in 45-minute, once-weekly sessions executed over 4 to 6 years. You can access Roads to Success by visiting www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov and clicking on the “For Educators” button on the I Have A Plan Iowa™ homepage. For more information, please contact Jenna Miller, Training Specialist, at 515-720-2385.



I Have A Plan Iowa is designed to help students prepare for college and careers.

Volunteer for a Site Team

Iowa educators are encouraged to volunteer to participate in one of the Iowa Department of Education school improvement site visits scheduled for the 2011-2012 school year. Serving on a site visit team has many benefits. It helps participants understand accreditation expectations, the preparation process, and allows educators to obtain in-depth information and examples from other districts. The site visit schedule and participation information will be available at www.state.ia.us/educate in early summer. For more information, contact Elizabeth Calhoun at 515-281-8170 or elizabeth.Calhoun@iowa.gov.

Special Education Law Conference in Iowa City

The Iowa Department of Education will be sponsoring a special education law conference on May 19-20, 2011, in Iowa City. The conference will focus on improving achievement for children with disabilities. Nationally known speakers will present on discipline, supporting access to the general curriculum, grading practices for students with disabilities, and other important topics for school leaders. More information, including an agenda and a registration link is available [here](#). Registration discounts are as follows: 3-10 people = \$150, 11-19 people = \$130, 20-Up people = \$125. If you qualify for a discount please enter the rate in the drop down box on the registration page. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Thomas Mayes (515-242-5614 or Thomas.Mayes@iowa.gov) or Michelle Ray (515-281-5494 or Michelle.Ray@iowa.gov).

Update on Federal Recovery Funds

As of this coming June 2011, most funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) will be fully disbursed to you as sub-recipients. This article summarizes some details worth noting as funding disbursements are completed.

Final Date for Spending

ARRA funds in the following categories must be obligated for activity that will have occurred on or before September 30, 2011. These ARRA funds cannot be spent on any activities that occur after that date.

- ARRA Education Stabilization – State Aid (FY09, FY10, & FY11)
- ARRA Education Stabilization – Instructional Support (FY10)
- ARRA Education Stabilization – Professional Development (FY10)
- ARRA Government Services Stabilization – State Aid (FY11)
- ARRA Title I – Basic Grants
- ARRA Homeless Youth Grants
- ARRA IDEA Part B Grants
- ARRA IDEA Part B Preschool Grants
- ARRA IDEA Part C Grants
- ARRA EETT Technology Grants



Because of exceptions in the federal regulations, if you are a grant sub-recipient in the following funds, the September 30, 2011 deadline does not apply:

- ARRA Title I – School Improvement Grants
- ARRA Iowa Teacher Quality Partnership Grant

Ed Jobs Fund

The Ed Jobs funding has many similarities to ARRA funding, but is technically not ARRA funding. The deadline to spend Ed Jobs funds is September 30, **2012**, meaning that these funds must be spent on activities that occur on or before that date.

Quarterly ARRA Section 1512 expenditure and jobs reporting

Quarterly reporting continues until funds are expended locally. The last fund disbursements will occur in mid-June, 2011. This means that for the next cycle of quarterly reporting, if you have fully expended any ARRA funding locally and mark the report as 100% expended, you will not see that report again.

With the threat of federal shut-down, the federal GAO moved the scheduled ARRA site visit to the first week in May. The federal USDE and Office of Inspector General (OIG) will be out in mid-June for a comprehensive review of Iowa's ARRA spending. Both visits will include targeted site visits to sub-recipients. So please continue to tend to requests for ARRA reports (the next cycle is at the end of June, 2011).

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ARRA Update ... *continued from previous page*

It is also strongly advised to continue to add enough detail to status descriptions and jobs information to fully and precisely describe how funds were spent. So rather than “teacher salaries and benefits”, instead say “4.6 elementary teacher salaries and benefits.” Rather than “instructional materials”, instead say “replaced K-8 math textbooks”. The detail included in these reports should be clear enough that someone with no knowledge of the system can read a given report and understand exactly how the funds were spent.

Fund Interest

Please be reminded that you cannot accrue interest on federal funding. If you are earning interest on these funds, here is the previous information related to interest on these funds:

*Per 34 CFR Subtitle A (7-1-03 Edition) Section 80.21(i) Authority: 20 U.S.C. 3474; OMB Circular A-102, interest earned on Federal advances deposited in interest bearing accounts shall be remitted annually to the US Department of Health and Human Services, Payment Management System, Rockville, MD 20852. Please note the CFDA number to which the interest earned applies. On each CFDA number, if the amount of interest earned is **\$100** or less annually, that amount may be retained by the recipient for administrative expense.*

Accessing the Reporting System during staff transition

These reports are tied to specific individuals and their emails at your end. If staff members change or you have an interest in having someone else manage the duty, the contact information tied to those ARRA reports must be changed manually and those individuals must be set up with a log in to the system. This requires you to contact the Iowa Department of Education to make that request. Requests like that can be made any time. The email used to log in must match the email attached to each report or the report will not appear on the persons “dashboard.”

If there are additional questions or concerns, please contact Jeff Berger at (515) 281-3968 or jeff.berger@iowa.gov.

Trainers of Mentors: Journey to Excellence

Journey to Excellence will be held June 27–July 1, 2011, at the Stoney Creek Inn in Johnston, Iowa. This event is designed to prepare individuals to serve as trainers of mentors in the Journey to Excellence Mentoring and Induction Program. The target audience is trainers of mentors, mentoring program coordinators, and administrators. This is not designed for mentors. Registration is limited to the first 75 who apply.

A new track in this training is being developed for individuals who have attended previously. Anyone who attended in 2008- 2010 will spend time in groups working on advanced materials and skills. *An expense stipend will be available for those attending the full training.* Registration is available online by clicking [here](#).

Lodging is available at Stoney Creek Inn, 5291 Stoney Creek Ct, Johnston, Iowa (515-334-9000).

For more information, contact Mary Beth Schroeder Fracek at 515-281-3160 or marybeth.schroederfracek@iowa.gov.

Iowa's AP Index ... *continued from page one*

The Top 50 schools range from rural to urban, public to nonpublic, and they span the state's geography. There are 42 public and 8 nonpublic schools in the Top 50.

In the latest index, George Washington earned the top score of 2.93; John F. Kennedy High School, another public high school in Cedar Rapids, came in second with a score of 2.55; Regina High School in Iowa City ranked third with a score of 2.05; West High School in Iowa City ranked fourth with a score of 1.95; and Ames High School ranked fifth with a score of 1.87.

Prince of Peace Academy and College Preparatory in Clinton, which ranked number 12, is the smallest school in the Top 50, with 23 graduates in 2010. Valley High School in West Des Moines, which ranked number eight, is the largest school on the index, with 525 graduates in 2010.

The Iowa AP Index is designed to give a fair comparison of AP opportunity across Iowa schools. An index score is calculated for each participating school based on the ratio of AP exams taken by all its students divided by the number of its graduating seniors. The rating reflects participation in the AP program at a school, not the overall quality of the school, according to Nicholas Colangelo, Belin-Blank Center director. However, one indication of a high school's commitment to preparing high-ability students for college is access to advanced courses.

"AP courses and exams are essential to ensuring that all students in the state of Iowa are as prepared for college as possible and receive the same rigorous academic experience, whether they are in Denison or Des Moines or Strawberry Point or Sioux City," Colangelo said. "We want to ensure that geography does not determine educational opportunity."



Students participating in an AP science lab examining models of the human brain.

Photo: Belin-Blank Center

Until recently, Iowa ranked among the lowest in the nation on AP exams per student population, in part because of the large rural demographic. In 2001, the Belin-Blank Center and the Iowa Department of Education established the Iowa Online AP Academy (IOAPA) to provide AP opportunities to all students at accredited high schools in Iowa, with a special focus on rural schools. The partnership with the Iowa Department of Education covers the cost of the courses, exams and materials.

Despite the substantial increase in the number of Iowa students taking AP exams since 2001, student performance remains high. In 2010, 64.5 percent of Iowa's students scored a three or better on the AP exams, which compares favorably to the 2010 national average of 57.9 percent of students who scored a three or better.

To view the list of this year's top 50 schools, click [here](#).

The Belin-Blank Center's AP Index website is at <http://www.iowaapindex.org/>.

World Food Prize Opportunity for Teachers, Students

High schools across Iowa are invited to send one teacher and one student to the World Food Prize Global Youth Institute, a three-day event October 13-15, 2011, that provides opportunities to interact with world-renowned scientists, business people and global leaders. Youth and their teachers attend portions of the World Food Prize International Symposium, participate in interactive events such as a food packaging project and a hunger banquet, and present essays students have written on global food security topics to World Food Prize laureates and others.

Due to space constraints, the program can accept only 80 student/teacher teams from Iowa, on a first-come, first-served basis. They will be joined by students and educators from other states and countries, as well. Registration is now open and details are available at www.worldfoodprize.org/iowayouth.

Teachers must register themselves and a student by September 1, 2011.

Participating students commit to writing an essay around this year's theme, which is "The Millennium Goals: Agriculture to Trade." Details and instructions are available on the website. Essays must be submitted by Sept. 23, 2011.

Students who participate in the Global Youth Institute are also eligible to apply for a Borlaug-Ruan International Internship, an eight-week, all expenses paid summer internship at a research center in Africa, Asia, Latin America or the Middle East, available to students after their junior or senior year of high school.

This year's World Food Prize International Symposium will focus on "The Next Generation" and focus on the challenges, leaders and technologies of tomorrow in the fight to end hunger worldwide.

This year marks the World Food Prize's 25th Anniversary, and events will include the Grand Opening of the Norman E. Borlaug Hall of Laureates in the former Des Moines Public Library on the riverfront.

For more information on the student essay or how to participate, please contact the World Food Prize Director of Youth and Education Programs Lisa Fleming at lfleming@worldfoodprize.org or at 515-245-3795.



Global Youth Institute participants gather at the Iowa State Capitol.

Photo: World Food Prize



Global Youth Institute participants have the chance to meet with leading scientists and policy makers.

Photo: World Food Prize

Arts, Gifted Education, and the Iowa Core

Although extraordinary polymaths like Leonardo Da Vinci and Hildegard von Bingen are rare, the type of interdisciplinary thinking they employed is not. Robert and Michele Root-Bernstein have studied the “thinking tools” utilized by those who are both artists and experts in other fields. Their book, Sparks of Genius: The Thirteen Thinking Tools of the World’s Most Creative People, provides engaging examples of these multi-talented individuals throughout history and encourages us to explore the thinking processes for ourselves. The Thirteen Tools, which include abstracting, analyzing, imaging, patterns, synthesizing, and transforming, align with identified skills in Iowa Core.

To examine the intersection of the arts and other disciplines and its impact on talent development, the Belin-Blank Center is bringing both co-authors of Sparks of Genius to Iowa City for the 6th Biennial Belin-Blank Center Advanced Leadership Institute (BBALI) on June 23 & 24. The Root-Bernsteins, along with other distinguished presenters in the areas of visual art, music, drama/theatre, creative writing and gifted education, will reflect on the questions: How do gifted arts students think? How do the arts impact academically gifted students? This event is a ‘must’ for educators who want to join the dialogue and gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of gifted students successful in the arts and how this affects their other academic experiences.

Also available is an optional Pre-institute: “Arts Education, Gifted Education, and Iowa Core,” from 9:00-noon on June 23. The Pre-Institute is being offered in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Education and will be presented by Ms. Rosanne Malek, Iowa Department of Education, Arts Education Consultant/Gifted Education Consultant; Mr. Leon Kuehner, Iowa Core Professional Development Team Member; and Ms. Colleen Anderson, Iowa Department of Education, Consultant for Student Assessment. They will provide a common overview of Iowa Core, show an alignment of Arts education and Iowa Core, and introduce the assessment development of Iowa Core essential skills to guide teachers in working with advanced learners. Arts education and the Iowa Core are a perfect combination in providing learning opportunities to prepare for students for various career options.

Belin-Blank Advanced Leadership Institute: Arts and Gifted Education

Thursday, June 23: 1:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Friday, June 24: 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Pre-Institute “Arts, Gifted Education, and Iowa Core”

Thursday, June 23: 9:00 a.m. – noon

Registration

www.belinblank.org/bbali



This year's Belin-Blank Advanced Leadership Institute focuses on the arts and gifted education, with a session relating to the Iowa Core.

Photo: Belin-Blank Center

Go to www.belinblank.org/bbali for registration and schedule details. Take Advantage of our Bring-a-Colleague Special Registration Discount! Ideal for K-12 classroom teachers, educators of the gifted, AND educators in the arts. If you have questions contact Dr. Clar Baldus at the Belin-Blank Center clar-baldus@uiowa.edu

Data & Reporting

Annual Progress Report Deadline

The deadline for submission of the Annual Progress Report (APR) is September 15, 2011. The secure website will be available June 1, 2011, for updating. The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED) test data will be available in August, 2011, for public school districts.

Further information for nonpublic schools will be forthcoming. The completed electronic APR will be available to the public via the Iowa Department of Education's website to distribute to stakeholders who may not have internet access. Technical assistance can be accessed online [here](#).

Please note that if you are writing your Annual Progress Report (APR) goals based on an assessment other than ITBS/ITED, please be aware that you will need to complete the Alternative Assessment portion of the APR. If you have questions, please contact Holly Barnes at 515-242-6173 or holly.barnes@iowa.gov.

CSIP Updates for School Districts and Nonpublic Schools

School districts and nonpublic schools that received a school improvement site visit during the 2010-2011 school year are required to revise and recertify their Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) by September 15, 2011. CSIP revisions are also required for any or all of the following actions (in accordance to Chapter 12):

- Grade level changes (as in cases of reorganizations-but does not include dissolution or Phase II)
- Funding stream changes

School districts and schools will be certifying their CSIP each year due to legislative changes that impact the assurances section of the Plan each year. Districts will not need to port their information forward this year. This has been done for you. You need to update and certify the 2010-11 CSIP. The certify button will not be available until September 1, 2011, although the CSIP is available for you to update at all times.

Please certify your 2010-11 CSIP by September 15, 2011. If you have questions or need assistance with the CSIP update and certification process please contact your assigned school improvement consultant from the Iowa Department of Education first. If you need further assistance, contact either Brandie Gean (515-281-4726 or brandie.gean@iowa.gov) or Holly Barnes (515-242-6173 or holly.barnes@iowa.gov).

Local Staff Transitions and Electronic Communication

Much of the communication to superintendents from the Iowa Department of Education (DE) is done via e-mail. This allows the DE to provide timely communication and has been a cost savings to the DE.

Every attempt is made to keep the superintendent's and other distribution lists up-to-date. To assure that all districts continue to receive e-mails over the summer, please contact marcia.krieger@iowa.gov to inform the DE if you **do not** plan on being with the district next fall. If you know your successor, please indicate that as well.

This would also apply to any principal or business manager changes. Also, please remember to go into EdInfo to adjust contact information as staff transitions occur.

Please contact Marcia Krieger at (515) 281-5293 or marcia.krieger@iowa.gov with questions or updates you have.

Early Childhood Preschool Programs

Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Update

The Iowa Department of Education (DE) understands that in the current legislative session, districts are uncertain of the future of the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP). Districts are encouraged to monitor the legislative process on this and any other issue by visiting the Iowa Legislature website at <http://www.legis.iowa.gov/> or the DE's Legislative Information page by clicking [here](#).

In the meantime, the DE will continue to support implementation of SWVPP and complete scheduled verification visits to assure programs are meeting quality standards.

For more information about the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children, please contact Judy Russell (515-281-4705 or Judy.Russell@iowa.gov) or Penny Milburn (515-281-7844 or Penny.Milburn@iowa.gov).

Student Health and Nutrition

Growing Farm to School ICN with Chef Cyndie

Farm to School Programs are in the news! Join us for an overview of Farm to School programs entitled *Farm to School 101*, for school food service and other school staff. The overview session is via ICN on May 9, 2011 from 3:00–5:00 p.m., presented by the Iowa Department of Education and Iowa State University Extension. The registration deadline is May 3, 2011.

Chef Cyndie Story's presentation will focus on the ingredients needed for getting started and how to communicate with growers, the needs of the school including food safety and other procurement requirements. Chef Cyndie will demonstrate how some Iowa grown foods (maybe from a school garden) can be used in the schools' child nutrition program. For more information, contact Abby K. Brown at abby@iptv.org.



Summer Healthier US School Challenge Workshops

There are *two* summer Healthier US School Challenge (HUSSC) trainings! Dates and locations are June 16, 2011, in Coralville, and June 29, 2011 in Council Bluffs (in combination with School Nutrition Association Iowa conference). The HUSSC trainings will be presented by National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI). Food Service Directors and Managers who are interested in HUSSC are invited to attend. The workshop will emphasize the criteria of the HUSSC through lectures and hands-on activities, including an overview of the application form.

Please contact Patti Delger at patti.delger@iowa.gov to register.

Transportation

Best of the Best!

The Iowa Department of Education, in association with the Iowa Pupil Transportation Association and the school bus dealers in Iowa, are proud to announce the winner of the third annual “Best of the Best” competition which was held on April 16th, 2011 in Waterloo.

The winner was Bill Ostrander, a bus technician from Johnston Schools! Bill received the best score of thirteen Iowa participants, and now advances to the national competition to be held in September in San Antonio, Texas.

The “Best of the Best” competition helps to recognize school bus technicians/mechanics for the important role they play in school transportation. The competition included both a 50-question written knowledge exam plus a “hands on” competition in which defects on four different buses had to be found and the tech had to then determine the correct repair procedures.

The national winner will receive an award at the national school transportation conference this fall in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Thanks to all who participated and congratulations to Bill Ostrander of Johnston Schools!



Iowa Department of Education School Bus Inspectors Owen Freese and Verlan Vos with Bill Ostrander of Johnston.



The thirteen participants of the 2011 Best of the Best competition

**Reorganizing to Lead, Innovate,
Serve ... continued from page 1**

This reorganization is taking place within the current funding level of the Department, re-arranging our existing resources in order to provide a greater focus on public policy design and implementation and most importantly improved service to our students, schools, districts and communities.

I am excited about the potential these changes will contribute to our efforts as we work together to return Iowa as a national leader in education.

Calendar

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|--------|---|
| May 1 | • Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act Postsecondary institution sends request for payment and list of students participating In PSEO to the appropriate LE |
| May 1 | • Bond resolution filing (if any) with control county auditor |
| May 1 | • Copy of VPPEL Ballot due to DOM |
| May 1 | • Competent Private Instruction/Homeschooling: Deadline for conducting annual assessment for homeschooled students 281-IAC 31.8(1) |
| May 9 | • Spring BEDS collection Site Open |
| May 13 | • State Board of Education meeting |
| May 16 | • Spring EASIER Collection Site Open |
| May 31 | • Certified Budget — last day for district to amend |

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, gender, disability, religion, age, political party affiliation, or actual or potential parental, family or marital status in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d and 2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.). If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, please contact the legal counsel for the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, telephone number 515/281-5295; or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661, telephone number 312-730-1560, fax 312/730-1576, e-mail: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov



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